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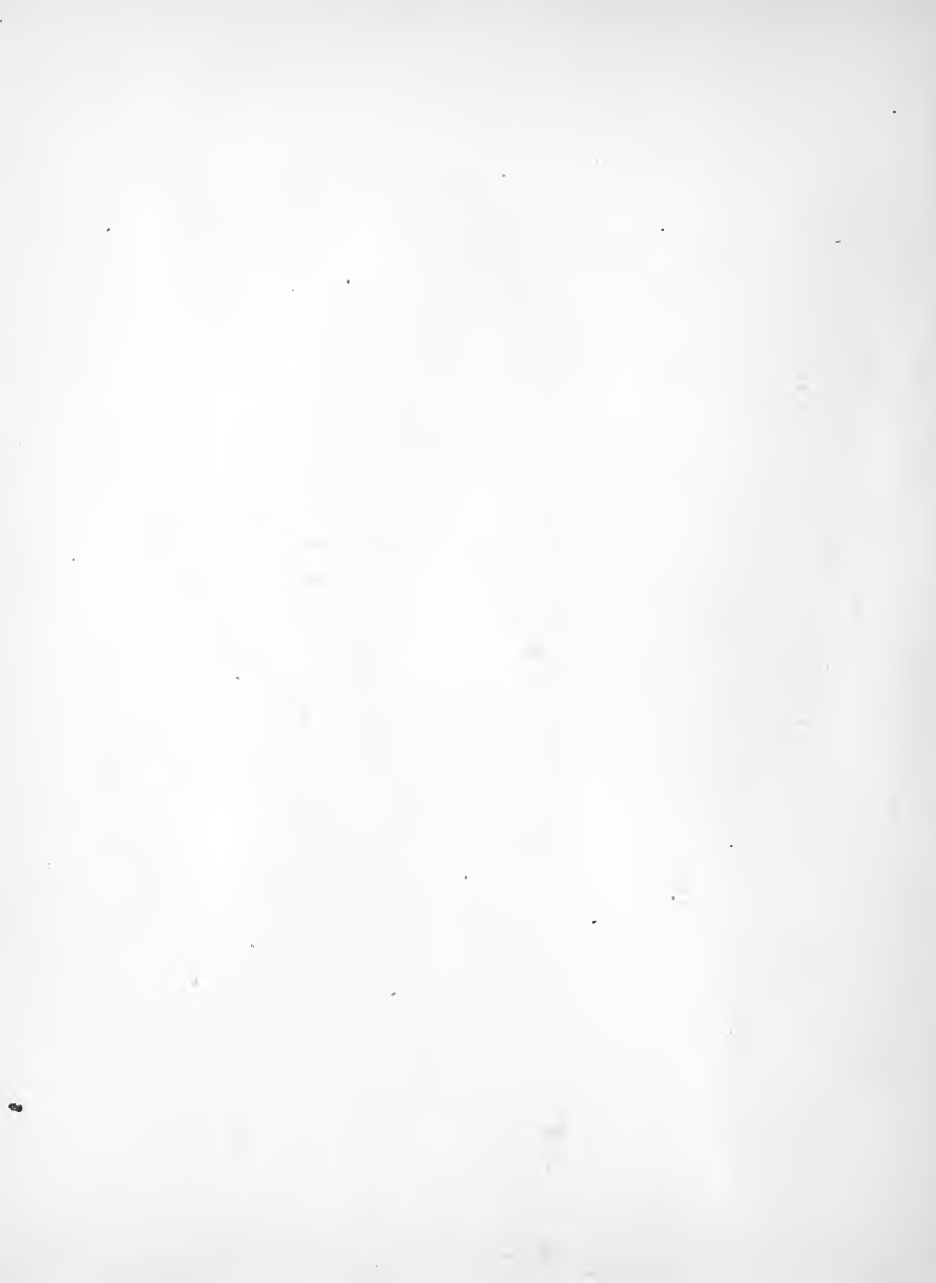
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







PERSEPHONE,

AND

OTHER POEMS.



PERSEPHONE,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

MRS. CHARLES WILLING,

AUTHOR OF "GENEVIEVE OF BRABANT."



PHILADELPHIA:

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1881.

[1880]

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PERSEPHONE.

Now wakes the lovely, nestling Arbutus
Where low it lies embalmed in withered leaves,
That spread their glowing pall above its bier
And shrouded it within its autumn grave.
The guardian ceremonies gently pressed aside,
Lo! like sweet infant faces, dewy-fresh,
Fragrant, rose-tinted, and yet waxen fair,
Smile the dear blossoms,—darlings of the spring.
They rise renewed in beauty: Nurturing rain
From farthest realms of sky hath visited
And fed their hidden life, and windy March
Hath touched the petals peering through the mould
And shed the auroral glow of Indian shells;
And now bright April suns distil the spice
And balsam gathered from earth's secret heart
By trailing tendrils searching all her stores.
They wake in beauty, and with them awakes
The yearning mother-love, that cannot quench

Its ceaseless longing, but complains no more.
Ah, my Persephone! when last I trod
This hillside, sloping to the level floor
Of gray old rock that guards the river's brim,
And through light, verdurous veil of April boughs
Saw the blue heavens, thou still wert by my side!
Together did we stir the sheltering leaves
For flowers of the sweet *Arbutus*; nor they
More exquisite in loveliness than thou!
The pearly brow, the cheek of tender rose,
The soft brown tresses of thy waving hair,
The dear, dear eyes,—pure wells of childlike love;
The light, free grace of thy ethereal step;
The sumptuous, moulded beauty of thy form,—
I see them all: I hear again the voice
Whose deep, melodious cadence thrilled my soul
And woke its echoes. Wandering side by side,
Thy hands with clustering blossoms filled, and mine,
We drank their fragrance, calling them too fair
For things of earth. Ah! not more swiftly they
Drooped, withered, died, fell from the loving clasp
Of my enfolding hand, than thou, beloved,
Didst vanish, leaving me bereft,—alone!

The sweet brown eyes, filled with love's dewy light,
Gazed wide at some fair vision far away;
And, blanching suddenly, the tender rose
Faded, and left the cheek all marble-pale;
The soft lips, gently parted, breathed no word,
But one white arm, in passionate embrace
Flung round my neck, expressed thy mute fare-
well.

Then bowed the stately form, and the young head,
Crowned with its waving wealth of braided hair,
Lay hidden 'neath the daisied turf of spring,
All the rich bloom and promise of thy life
Ending, as these fair blossoms fall and die.
They shall return; fresh Aprils still shall know
Their charm of tint, of perfume, and of form;
But thou,—ah! thou returnest nevermore.
Low in the grass I hide my burning brow,
And water with the rushing rain of tears
The earth that once thy joyous footstep trod,
And to the dewy fragrant flowerets press
My sobbing lips, that murmuring, sobbing still,
Strive yet to cry, "I would not call thee back."
"Rest, rest, beloved one! I repine no more!"

Peace comes at last. The deep relief of tears
Has cooled the throbbing temples and has eased
The bitter heart-pang, and I feel the air
Breathe gently o'er me, and I hear the stir
Of the young leaves, the river's lapsing flow,
And murmurous sounds of wingèd life; and now
The little tinkling rills with flutelike voice
Sing faint and fainter in the earth's deep heart:
As by a soothing hand are hushed to rest
The wide world's sorrow and my own sharp pain.
Meseems the encircling air itself grows bright
With some sweet, radiant presence. Twilight eyes,
Serene and luminous with love's own light,
Shed their deep, tender calmness on my soul:
Persephone! beloved! 'tis thou! 'tis thou!

Yes, by the blissful shore
Of that fair Paradise wherein I dwell,
A deeper joy upon my spirit fell,
The golden day grew lovelier than before,
Diviner light seemed shed from Eden's sky
When rose thy fervent cry,
"I will repine no more!"

Ah! sweet is the release
From all earth's clashing tumult and its din;
No tone of sorrow and no sound of sin
Enter through Eden's gate.
The notes of pain, of wrath, of malice cease;
They reach no more the ears of those who wait
Till heaven's great glory dawn, and its eternal peace.

But holy thought and deed,
And each repentant, each submissive word,
Low-breathed in human hearts, by man unheard,
Thrill all that blessed band,
And glorious angels on swift pinions speed
To spread the tidings, or with guiding hand
To minister to those who strength and solace need.

Earth holds the mystic dower
By which, obedient to her Maker's law,
Her magnet to its own strong heart must draw
And clasp its kindred steel,
Nor knows the ignoble clay,—type of that power
By which the Blest each blessed impulse feel,
To all things evil dead since death's transforming
hour.

Thus o'er my being swept
In untold sweetness that submissive cry;
And, as the wind-harp breathes its low reply
In music when the air
Sighs o'er its strings, I sought thee as thou slept,
And whispered in thine ear of all things fair,
Dear mother mine, and dreaming watch beside thee
kept.

My mother, is it long?
For us no suns revolve, no planets roll,
And the hushed rapture of the adoring soul
Knows naught of days or years.
'Tis but one blissful moment since the song
Of angels waked me, since they wiped the tears
That only to our earlier, earthly home belong.

Deem not a hovering ghost
That I return, earth-bound and seeking rest.
Thy happy bird hath gained its sheltering nest,
Thy lamb its peaceful fold,
Ne'er to be hurt by foes, or tempest-tost,
Or spent with lonely wanderings on the wold,—
Safe, safe forevermore amid the deathless host!

Thou wouldst not lure me back!
Nor deem'st thou from their glad, immortal spheres
The blessed spirits watch Earth's painful years.
Thy love with clearest ray
Might bridge the abyss all fathomless and black;
But wouldst thou call me from my golden day,
E'en were it mine to tread that slender, shining track?

Ah! seek me not by sign,
Or word, or listening ear, or watchful eye!
In the wide realms of love and memory,
And only there, we meet.
Through Earth's dark firmament like planets shine
The sacred few from Eden's holy seat
On wondrous errands sent to men by Power Divine.

Earthward, through shades of night,
One mighty spirit swept, Heaven's doom to bring
To the seared heart of Israel's guilty king,—
To smite *her* with dismay
Who dared invoke the dead; and, dazzling bright,
The twain for whom Earth knew no burial-day
Clave her blue skies again and hung o'er Tabor's
height.

Never for living men
Seeking the dead, while round them the mute air
Might thrill with uttered and with answered prayer
May happy souls arise.
Swift, subtle Echo still responds again,
Or ancient Night with ghastly mockeries
Sends forth her wizard troupe from many a dark-
some den.

I may not come to thee
Save in thy dreams. From that ethereal clime
No foot can wander to the shores of Time,
No tongue from thence can call ;
But when thine inner eye alone can see,
When sleep hath sealed thine ear, then oft shall fall
Upon thy heart the voice of thy Persephone.

Still when the spring makes fair
The world, and lulls its sorrow and its pain,
Dreams shall restore to thee thy child again,
To wander at thy side,
To search the fallen leaves with tender care,
And seek with thee Earth's blossoms far and wide,
Till lovelier flowers are thine, fed by celestial air.

Ah! when thy heart shall know
The perfect peace and beauty of that home,—
The garden-world through which my footsteps
 roam,—

Thou canst repine no more.
There with sweet cadence the four rivers flow,
Girdling the lovely plains upon whose shore
From far-off shining heights soft airs of Eden blow.

Beside those rivers fair
The Eden-trees their fragrant branches lave,
Whose tops in depths of lucid ether wave.
The world's lost Paradise
Renews its life of stainless beauty there,
Beneath the mystic loveliness of skies
Touched by a light more pure than dawn and noon-
 tide wear.

There lies the twilight land,—
Land of serene and infinite repose;
From life's long sickness, from its cares and woes
The weary rest, and feel,
In renovating might, the gracious Hand

Of Power and Love each wound, each weakness,
 heal,
Till heaven's own strength and joy shall fill the
 blessed band.

But mine the joyous day:
Gathered in youth to their great Shepherd's side,
Lambs of His earthly fold tread pastures wide,
Fair shore or gleaming height,
Or in glad, gentle companies delay,
Reverent about His path,—their deep delight
To gaze on one dear Face and own one Sovereign
 Sway.

The holy angels come,
As to man's earlier Eden once they came;
Seraphs with heavenward-pointing wings of flame
Shed splendor on our day;
Soft clouds of angel-faces from the dome
Of sky bend o'er us, and in glad array
Lead through the crystal gate Earth's new-born
 spirits home.

Then all the hills and vales
Echo with silvern song,—melodious chime
Of angel-voices, filling that sweet clime
E'en to its radiant skies.
Yet a diviner harmony exhales;—
The Light, the Life, the Lord of Paradise
Blesses His rescued flocks amid its happy dales.

Knowst thou what He has done?
From heights supreme, from untold bliss, He came
To kindle on His Earth the holy flame
And joy of sacrifice.
That bliss for us He left, for us He won
Who follow Him through death to Paradise.
Wilt thou give naught to Him, my own beloved one?

Knowst thou that thorn-pierced Brow,
Whence glory streams on the encircling air,—
That presence than the sons of men more fair?
Knowst thou that radiance bright
From hands, and feet, and side? Ah, knowest thou
To death's sharp anguish, to the grave's deep night,
E'en as thy child's, that sacred, kingly Head did bow?

Fresh beauty born of death,
Diviner blessing wrought through blight and curse,—
This is the key-note of His universe.
From death-cell of the worm
Springs the fair Psyche, borne on Zephyr's breath,
Radiant in color, exquisite in form;
Glorious it is to die! the wingèd Psyche saith.

Ah, yield me to His care!
All human lineaments His power did mould,
Secure in holiest keeping He doth hold;
He knows each hidden grave.
The wondrous frame He made, and deigned to wear,
Renewed, refined by fire or frost or wave,
He feeds with ampler life,—bids it His likeness bear.

Beneath these April flowers,
Low lying in its hushed and cradled rest,
The form thy tender mother-hand caressed
From the deep heart of Earth
Draws, through each secret source, the nobler powers
And fairer beauty of its second birth.
It shall be mine again, and Heaven itself be ours.

Then shall we *live* once more.—
The Rest remaining for God's people blends
With that full Life, whose gladness never ends.
All faith foretold is given,—
Hope's dreams and fancy's feignings pale before
Those rapturous realities of Heaven,—
Creation's depths to sound, its heights explore,—
Blessing and blest, to learn, love, wonder, and
adore;—

To read the ages gone,—
Existence guided by Omniscient Mind;—
To trace all harmonies of Love that wind
Through tones of Sovereign Will;—
To hear the wondrous Symphony roll on
From age to age;—to feel the deepening thrill
Of the full heart toward HIM Who all our bliss
hath won.

Rejoice! He guards my soul,
Makes my freed spirit tranquil, glad, and strong;
And clearer, sweeter than the morning song
Of Earth's clear-singing birds,

And grander than her ocean's solemn roll,
Floats the majestic music of His words,
Guiding from Eden's rest toward Heaven, our
glorious goal.

And though thou lingerest here
Amid the mists, the shades, the woes of time,
Yet far, faint echoes of that tone sublime
Oft to thy heart will come,—
Will lift, sustain, invigorate, and cheer;
And 'mid the sacred sweetness of my home
May thy submissive cry still bless my listening
ear!

'Tis past,—the ecstasy of that dear dream!
Consoled as by some miracle, I wake,
And, lo! from dread eclipse emerging, faith
Bathes all the happy world in golden light.
Hope sings anew her anthems in my soul
To the creative Power, the Living Love,
That made the mind receptive of such joy,
And through the shadowy portal of our dreams
Sends His sweet messengers. Did I repine?

Witness, thou blessed Earth, that hid'st the form
Thou yet shalt render back to me again,
And ye blue depths that veil the bright abode
Of my Persephone, I mourn no more!

Here, on this sod I watered with hot tears
Of anguish, where I breathed my bitter moan,
Kneeling, I thank Thee, the dear Lord of Life,
And Light of Paradise, Who through the vale
And the dark gate of death didst lead my child
Forth to Thy glorious land of light and life!
I thank Thee, praise Thee, bless Thee, evermore!

HESPERUS.

THE SETTLER'S TALE.*

LISTEN, dear lads! The wind blows free
And brings the roar of the restless sea:
Nearer it booms with each fitful blast;
The spray far up on the downs is cast.
Draw closer, closer around the fire,
And heap fresh logs till the flame rise higher,—
Strong limbs of the live-oak and balsam-tree,—
And I'll tell you the tale you ask of me.

In days long past a wanderer came
To our Southern Cape of the beautiful name;
In this land of Good Hope he found a home
So fair that he asked no more to roam,—

* Founded on a fact related by Elihu Burritt as occurring among the Dutch settlers of the Cape of Good Hope.

A home where the high down slopes and bends,
And a narrow vale to the sea descends,
Where southern pine-trees their shadows fling,
And orchard-blossoms are sweet in spring.

One comrade alone, o'er the ocean foam,
Bernardin, the wanderer, led from his home,—
A stately creature of Flemish stock,
As true and as staunch as the granite rock,
Gentle of heart, yet with soul of fire,—
A Flemish steed, but a steed whose sire
Was that exquisite union of grace and of force,
The wonderful barb, the Moorish horse.

Firm on the sierra and fleet on the plain
His light, agile foot, and from fetlock to mane
He was raven black, save that, gleaming far,
On his dusky front shone a snow-white star,
E'en as Hesper shines in the twilight skies
While gathering darkness around it lies,
And the steed shed a ray of gladness yet
O'er his master's life, whence the sun had set.

Thus the young, gallant creature bore the name
Of Hesperus when to our shore he came,
Guided and trained by his master's hand,
Hearkening and heeding each lightest command,
His swift-moving ear still alert for the voice
That swayed all his will, till obedience was choice;
For, with soul in which firmness and gentleness
blend,

The manly master had made him his friend.

No curb had tortured the tender lip,
He knew not the pang of the savage whip,
For Bernardin's whisper Hesperus heard,
Came swift at his call, and sped far at his word.
Each day when the whistle shrill and clear
Reached his hillside pasture, fleet as a deer
He bounded to meet his master's hand
And, bearing him, paced toward the white sea-strand.

They, through the bowery hollow going,
Heard the free winds above them blowing
Over the down with freshening sweep,
And the far-off murmur of the deep;

And through bending bough and tasselled vine,
Down the verdurous valley's long incline,
Saw the distant blue of the ocean lie
'Neath the softer blue of the noontide sky.

Onward and downward, till, wide and free,
The green valley opens to meet the sea,
And rider and steed on the sands emerge;
And, lo! from the far horizon's verge
The surging billows shoreward roll
From their shoreless bourne,—the Southern Pole,—
Now gentle and calm in their mighty play,
Now thundering and furious with foam and spray.

But, if calm in its beauty the ocean lay,
Or thundering in fury and blinding with spray,
The master his whispered signal gave,
And Hesperus leaped through the coming wave,
And, his proud crest lifted in valiant cheer,
Far out to a rocky reef would steer,
Then, gathering power in each vigorous limb,
Swifter and stronger would landward swim.—

A daily pastime, that gave at length
A peerless courage, an unmatched strength;
And many a gallant and daring deed
Of the gentle master and wondrous steed
Through our hills and valleys was told and sung,
Till the names of Bernardin and Hesperus rung
As the generous twain still swift to save
Imperilled lives from an ocean grave.

'Twas a day of storm, but shoreward wend,
As ever, the steed and the man, his friend;
When, lo! on that rocky reef there lay
A huge ship, beating her life away.
Down from her side they lower the boats,
Each is wrecked in an instant, before it floats,
And the struggling, sinking burden it bare
O'er the pitiless sea sends a wail of despair.

Swiftly the boats from the shore are manned;
Swifter they backward are hurled on the strand;
With dauntless prowess each resolute crew
Spends its utmost force, and no more can do.

Men rush with cable, and line, and rope,—
Watch the tossing arms,—“*Is there then no hope!*”—
When swift as an arrow, and ardent as flame,
To the rescue Bernardin on Hesperus came!

Round the chest and trunk of the stalwart steed
A network of cable he wove with speed,
And its utmost length he coiled and wound
Firmly his strong right arm around,
Then he leaned and whispered, “*Do this for me,
My Hesperus!*” and they rode into the sea,
Plunging and straining, now shoreward cast,
Now seaward, they gain the reef at last.

A shout of rapture goes up from the strand
As the cable is cast from the master's hand
And clutched with the strength of a drowning clasp;
Then, the weaker sustained by the stronger's grasp,
The cable stretched to its utmost length,
The steed to the shore with his giant strength
Struggles and forges, with three times ten
As his trophy of rescued and living men.

Panting, exhausted, he reaches the shore.

He has rested; the dear master whispers, "*Once more !*

"Wilt thou do this, my Hesperus, once more for me?"

And the gallant horse plunges again in the sea.

Fearful the conflict ! he struggles amain !

He buffets, he conquers the billows again ;

Again to the shipwrecked the cable is cast,

And the strong, splendid steed gains the firm earth
at last.

All trembling and quivering he stands on the shore
With the wonderful freightage of life that he bore,
And men shout and men weep at the glorious deed,
While the breathless master caresses his steed :

"Ah, my Hesperus ! others great acts have done,
But for strength and for valor the palm thou hast
won !"

As he spake he looked out with a pang o'er the sea,
And sighed, "*Canst thou ride forth yet once with me ?*"

The noble horse the light whisper heard,
And, with vigor renewed by his master's word,

Dashed fearless again through the whelming wave,
While a wild cry went up "*They have gone to their
grave!*"

But the tossing arms still Bernardin saw,
And to succor, to save, was his being's law,
And the steed knew naught save one quickening
thrill

Of rapture in doing his master's will.

Swept landward, swept seaward, in desperate strife,
Now rushing, now yielding, now battling for life,
Diving, eluding each vast billow's shock,
They gain yet once more the reef of rock;
Lo! joy leaps up in the ruddy glare
That gleams from its surface,—the rock is bare!
Through routed storm-clouds the red sun burned,
And life might be saved!—for the tide had turned!

Sore burdened, though slenderly freighted, with
few

Dearly ransomed lives of the drowning crew,
Shoreward, shoreward, with one last strain,
The harnessed Hesperus struggled amain.

Boatmen, and landsmen, and shipwrecked men
Thronged into the sea to aid him then,
As with staggering limbs and bloodshot eyes
He falls, and beside his mute master lies.

They cut the cables that round him twine,
And our cordial—our own Constantia wine—
From the delicate flagons is poured with speed
Through the master's lips and the lips of the steed.
They feed with pine-boughs the glowing flame,
Chafe each chilled limb and each spent, stiffened
frame,
Till Bernardin and Hesperus, as from the grave,
Receive back the life that so freely they gave.

Heaven gave them again to my prayer! for I
Had looked my last upon sea and sky
That day when the battered and broken deck
Lay swept by the storm in utter wreck,
Were it not for the courage, the will, the force,
Of that noble rider and noble horse,—
For me, 'mid the last of the shipwrecked crew,
In that fearful strife from the surf they drew.

In his vine-clad home, by his evening fire,
Sits a gray-haired man,—a reverend sire:
His ear is not dull, and his eye is not dim,
And memory whispers sweet tales to him,—
Tales of his vigorous, golden prime
When he pressed with joy to that deed sublime;
For this is Bernardin,—this is he
Who ransomed our lives from the hungry sea.

A kingly throne is his oaken chair,
And a crown of glory his silver hair,
For the man who his life to the waves could fling
To rescue men, among men is king.
And still where the orchard grasses feed,
With their pasture sweet, the grand old steed,
Bernardin sends his clear whistle far
And Hesperus comes,—his life's evening star!

Ay! shout, my lads! cleave the twilight air
With your ringing cheers for the glorious pair,
And when homeward you ride o'er the downs to-
night
Guide each good horse with a hand more light,

More gently press on his bit of steel,
Spare him the sting of the armèd heel;
Ah! be, like Bernardin, a friend to your steed :
Give him love, and he'll *give you his life* at need!

NOONTIDE REST.

STAY yet a while, thou fair meridian hour!

O happy noon of life, more slowly glide!

From these calm heights we see the valleys
wide

Of youth's hot morning journey. O'er us tower

The steeps which yet with steps of firmer power

And readier vigor, since by action tried,

Our feet should climb. Meantime; the mountain's
side

Is sweet; sweet every gathered flower

Our hands enfold, and sweet the sunny air;

Warmth, clearness, fragrance, brightness, round us
spread;

From vale and plain soft breezes upward bear

Echoes of tones that made the morning glad:

Linger, fair noon! blest memories of thy
light

Shall brighten all our pathway till the night.

Such is the strain that from the matron band
Of elder sisters downward floats to you,
Young pilgrims through the valleys fresh with dew
And bright with sunshine of the morning-land.

They waft their greeting through the midday air,
And, pausing on the steep and upward slope,
With voices soft with memory, glad with hope,
Would say, "Not YOUTH *alone*, but LIFE, is fair."

But late they wandered 'neath your cloudless skies,
Glowed on their heads the sacred early light,
And radiant mists of morning veiled the height
Where now their arduous noontide pathway lies.

Oft would they press the turf with fervid haste,
Then lost in dreams of tender languor stand;
Now fill with opening buds the eager hand,
Now idly bend each gliding stream to taste.

Not every fount they quaffed with ardent lip
Bore health and coolness on its crystal wave;
Here the dank marsh its slow defilement gave,
There deadly flowers their poisoned chalice dip.

Nor bloomed to life in that sweet morning air
Each tender bud they gathered to their breast;
Some idly held, and some too closely pressed,
Fell from their grasp or withered 'neath their care.

Yet, tasted then, from many a living spring
Still pure refreshment glides through every vein,
And still these hands with loving clasp retain
Full many a bud in ripened blossoming.

Like you, scarce recked they of the ascending way,—
Glad wanderers of the valley and the plain,—
Till round them closed the rugged mountain-chain
And its cold shadows on their pathway lay.

Dread not that hour, young pilgrim! thou shalt feel
Unwonted power reanimate thy frame:
Youth's fervid haste to steadfast action tame;
Youth's tender languor brace with nerves of steel.

Yes, gladly drink that ether keen and clear,
Bend thy light footstep to that toilsome way;
A twofold vigor shall thy trust repay,
Strong in thyself and strong to aid and cheer.

Nearer shall press to share thy joy, thy pain,
The loved ones, through the cloud and sunshine
tried;
Children shall gather at thy sheltering side,
And thy firm arm the aged shall sustain.

Thine eye shall pierce to depths undreamed be-
fore
In skies serene and luminously clear,
And o'er the mountain-gorges dark and drear
Shall see far up the sunbright summits soar.

Thine ear shall catch the myriad tones that rise
From the near valleys, from the far-off steep;
Shall hear the avalanche slide, the torrent
leap,
And gather all the great world's harmonies.

And on full many a well-earned vantage-ground
Where verdant slopes replace the rugged soil
Sweet respite shalt thou take amid thy toil,
And gaze below, above thee, and around;

Shalt joy to see the great horizon spread
Wider, more fair, while plain and valley merge
In realm and state, and on the distant verge
Gleams the vast sea, by rolling rivers fed.

Round thee are still thy loved ones ; larger faith
Links thy glád soul to all the mighty band
Gathered from every clime and every land
Who with thee tread the still-ascending path.

And o'er thee bends the bright and happy sky,
Radiant with blessing, and its wondrous dome
Is to thee but the boundary of thy home,
And all its clouds are lovely to thine eye.

And air is vocal with the accents clear
And tender whispers of the Eternal Tongue,
That awed thee when thy pilgrimage was young,
Now breathing heaven's full sweetness on thine ear.

Yet, onward ! upward ! for the steady sun
Begins from his great zenith to decline ;
Through golden mists his level glories shine,—
Onward ! for nobler heights may yet be won.

Till all too soon the glory in the west
Proclaims thy journey and thy day are past;
Night softly shrouds thee in her mantle vast:
The Eternal Morn awaits thee; take thy rest.

SORRENTO.

FAIR, fair Sorrento, let me dream of thee!
For naught but dreams may to my soul restore
The Elysian beauty of thy purple shore,
Seen through the sunset air of Italy,
Thy white walls gleaming o'er that azure sea
Whose every wave is laden with the lore
Of glorious days gone by. And oft to me,
Though these sad eyes revisit thee no more,
May dreams bring freshly back that golden day
When 'midst thy sea-encircled bowers I stood,
And the fair scene my distant glance had wooed
Around me in its living beauty lay!
Let the dusk foliage of the olive-wood
Wave softly o'er my head in dreams again;
O'er the blue sea let southern breezes play
And wake it from its noon-tide sleep, as then;
Let sunlit hills with climbing vineyards gay
Lift their clear summits to the laughing sky;

Let orange-groves shed verdure o'er the plain
And perfume on the soft airs wandering by;
And let the music of one glorious name
Come sweetly to my ear, as then it came:
Fit cradle, thou, for Tasso's infancy
Ere his young soul had bowed to woe and guiltless
shame!

Thus, fair Sorrento, would I dream of thee,
With thy pure cloudless sky that brightly bends
Above thy vine-clad hills, thy orange-bowers,
The murmur of whose fragrant sighing blends
With the low whisper of the joyous sea
That fans thee all the long, long summer hours,
Breathing to thee its tuneful memories
As in its soft embrace thy sunny beauty lies.

THE HEAD ON PROFILE MOUNTAIN.

STERN, mailèd knight of a giant race,
The last of the Titans thou!—
Thy feet at the mountain's wave-washed base,
Thy head on the mountain's brow!

In grim repose, on the great hill's side,
With thy vizor lifted high,
Above the land whence thy race had died,
Thou didst lay thee down to die.

And the soil and the forests of ages spread
Their covering o'er thy form,
But still thy grand and helmèd head
Looks forth to the sun and storm.

Companionless, from its mountain height,
 Silent and vast and dread,
Encompassed by space and air and light,
 Soars that majestic head.

Older than Egypt's sculptured kings,
 Thine are the dateless years;
Thy gaze uplifted o'er living things
 'Mid the lofty peaks, thy peers,

Thou seest the slopes of a thousand hills,
 In the vales a thousand streams;
Through thy cloud-girt ear the thunder thrills,
 On thy casque the lightning gleams.

The midnight moon on thy rocky crest
 Hangs like a living gem,
And the stars thy furrowed brows invest
 With a regal diadem.

When Earth was young, in their solemn march,
 They shone on that outline grand,
And crowned thee nightly, 'neath heaven's wide arch,
 As a monarch in the land.

Thou drinkest the noontide's glorious blue,—
The blue of the clear mid-heaven,—
And bathest thy locks in the silvery dew,—
The tender dew of even.

Around thee the summer mist entwines
Its graceful garlands white,
And pure and cold on thy forehead shines
The morning's earliest light.

Thy presence the lonely valley fills
As in ages that long have flown,
Ere man had trodden these ancient hills
And when silence reigned alone;

As in days when the Indian glanced in fear
While he sped through the forest track,
And thy mute lips echoed his hunter-cheer.
Or sent his wild war-cry back.

Oh, long may'st thou look o'er the subject land
From thy couch of grand repose!
May summers lull thee with breezes bland,
And winters spare their snows.

To thy rugged front be decay unknown,
 And as centuries roll away
Mayst thou utter still from thy mountain throne
 Thy tale of an elder day.

A WAR IDYL.

STILL I see the blue sky of one exquisite day,
And the verdure-crowned city beneath it that lay,
As I stood by my casement that morning in May.

Then I hear in my heart the quick, resonant beat
Of the drum as it pressed up the echoing street,
And the gathering tramp of the strong, steady feet.

Our recruits, yet unarmed, in deep silence they
 moved,
Each heart-pang by conscience and valor reproved;
One looked up,—and my eyes gazed in eyes that I
 loved.

Ah, how did I bear it? Each pulse standing still,
The wild outcry curbed by the resolute will,
Till the blood leaped again with one rapturous thrill.

Yes, thou, my young hero ! What more could I ask
Than that thou shouldst be first in each glorious task,
Whose grand soul lay hidden 'neath Pleasure's gay
mask ?

The light mask I feared, though the great soul shone
through ;
My tongue to my heart's fond consent was untrue,
Till at length those proud lips for my love ceased
to sue.

The drum-beats, the footsteps, I hear them no more ;
That moment of triumph, of rapture, is o'er,
And anguish sweeps down on my soul as before.

Ah ! can I o'erlive the long, secret despair
If he leave me and speak not ? If I alone care ?
Hush ! hush ! 'tis his foot even now on the stair.

And swift as a thought he has knelt at my side :
" My angel ! my darling ! this heart cannot hide
The love that in death still would ask for its bride."

"For life or for death am I thine, mine own love,
The fervor and faith of my soul thou shalt prove.
I will live for thee here, or I'll meet thee above."

In the glow of his triumph I sent him away,
But, pulseless and cold, in mute anguish I lay
Till the drums told their march at the dawning of day.

For life and for death! Nevermore at my side
Shalt thou kneel; yet my hero, my joy, and my
pride,

Thou, thou art my lover! and I am thy bride.

Though hushed the dear lips, though the glorious
head

Lies low 'neath the turf of thy desolate bed,
The grand soul that looked from thine eyes is not
dead.

For death and for life! The dark years steal away,
And I see the clear dawn of an ampler day
Than shone through my casement that morning in
May.

THE CHANT IN THE CHURCH- YARD.

IN the Church-yard, amid the tombs, I heard
The joyous note of a carolling bird;
Alighting on many a lowly grave,
Its silver music the silence clave
Till the air and the leafy boughs were ringing
With the clear, sweet sound of that jubilant singing.
Dear bird, I thought, is such joyance meet
Where the dead lie mute at our very feet,—
Where the sacred earth for uncounted years
Has been watered with rain of bitter tears,
And the mourner's sob and the priest's low prayer
Are lingering yet on the sighing air?

But, treading the ancient Church-yard's bound,
Lo! beauty and life my steps surround;
In this latest home of our human sadness
Nature creates a new realm of gladness:

With all her treasures fairest and best
She decks the slumberer's couch of rest ;
O'er richest grasses her curtaining vines
With wealth of leafage she folds and twines ;
She wakes sweet flowers from the teeming earth
And girdles each grave with growth and birth ;
Here domes of foliage their shadows fling,
And she bids her birds to build and sing,
And with potent spell and prophetic voice
She whispers, " Ah, weep not, but rejoice !"

Dear bird, my thought did thee utmost wrong ;
Sing thy sweet carol,—sing blithe and strong !
Chant thy glad song o'er the early dead,
Pour its clear notes round their grassy bed,
Mingle its tones with the murmur made
By winds that breathe through the thick-leaved shade.
Yes, fill with thy music the summer air,
For sweet is their rest who slumber there !
Never did sorrow or care or strife
Cloud the bright day of their blossoming life ;
Brief was the pang as the soul ebb'd away,
Soft sank the head on its pillow of clay,

And still like an Eden seemed earth when their eyes
Unclosed 'neath the radiance of happier skies.
LOVE watches that waking. HE folds to His breast
His children, and gives what earth giveth not,—rest.
Fill with thy requiem the summer air
For the early dead who slumber there.

Breathe thy sweet lay o'er the agèd dead,
Soft let it float round the weary head:
Sadness and sickness and mourning and care
Have withered the frame and have silvered the hair;
Long was the journey, and one by one
The friends who had blessed it and cheered it were
gone.

Hardly the task of submission was learned,
Dearly the peace that flows from it was earned;
Then broke on the saddened and tempest-tossed soul,
The Infinite Morning; it wins the bright goal
Where sorrow finds solace and weariness rest,
And Life, in Love's sunshine reposing, is blest.
Ah! fill with thy requiem the summer air
For the agèd dead who slumber there.

Chant a triumphant song for the dead!
Breathe it not low o'er their grassy bed,
But lift thy voice through the heavens afar
Toward sun and planet and distant star,
And mingle thy soaring, enraptured lays
With their anthem of blessing and love and praise!
With the strains, unearthly sweet, that rise
From infant lips in those happy skies,
With the glorious voices of those who pour
Thanksgiving for labors and trials o'er,
Catch the glad note of their song of love
And chant it their lowly graves above!
Yes, fill with thy music the summer sky
For the dead who have gone to their home on high.

AUTUMN.

I.

SEPTEMBER, frugal husbandman, the son
Of lavish Summer, in young vigor stands
And gazes o'er his sunny, fruitful lands.
The gracious mother's long, bright day is done;
Toward him whose dewy prime has just begun
She bends, and with her bounty freights his hands.
Her charm of outline, feature, color, still
Are his; her beauty and her gladness fill
The balmy air, and breathe her benison
Wide over fertile meadow, stream, and hill.
To him her vineyards and her orchards yield
Their wealth. With rustic grace he treads the plain
And upland, reaping all the ripened grain,
Until his harvest moon lifts high its silver shield.

II.

October comes,—the glory of the year,—
Draping the lovely woodlands, fold on fold,
In splendid woof of scarlet and of gold
Beneath her morning sky of sapphire clear.
Freshly her fingers barb the Pine's green spear
And all its sun-kissed tassels poise and mould,
Then drop the burnished chestnut from their hold.
Down from the glowing hillsides, 'neath her feet
She spreads her tapestry of emerald wheat,
Her richest rose and amber swift she lays
On meadow maples, bids the bramble blaze ;
Anon the sweet enchantress waves her hand
And sparkling ether melts in golden haze
As sunset glows o'er the transfigured land.

III.

Slow fades the pageant, gloriously fair,
Paled is the splendid flush of rainbow dyes,
The sparkling azure of the morning skies,
The golden radiance of the sunset air:
November, with clear cheek and mist-wreathed hair,
Beneath her soft gray heavens in stillness lies.
No grace of waving boughs her woodlands wear,
But columns lone and buttressed arches rise.
And sudden hush succeeds high carnival.
The glory of the purple grape is shed,
From her pure hands now silent snowflakes fall;
The grain is garnered, all earth's tribes are fed,
The sacred feast is done, and over all
With tender grace the fair white cloth is spread.

NIGHT.

A THOUGHT of awe and wonder o'er me stole
In the vast presence of the glorious Night;
It comes not when the fair, full moon is bright
And floods with radiance even the farthest pole,
But when the stars with pure and solemn light
Their countless hosts in glittering order roll,
Then, gazing on from shining height to height,
From universe to universe, my soul
Soars trembling up to HIM whose word alone
Breathed throughout space this light and harmony,
Who through these glowing myriads on the one
Dark, rebel world could bend His pitying eye
And for the joy of saving leave His throne,
Amid its woes to live,—amid its pangs to die.

SILENCE.

I.

I THOUGHT on Silence, for my soul would fain
Measure the grandeur of that mighty thought,
The elemental Power which when was nought
Save Night and Chaos o'er their realm did reign;
But through this breathing universe in vain
Its region and its dwelling-place I sought.
The sky with sound of flowing airs is fraught;
The mountain solitudes, bound in the chain
Of adamant ice, have yet their voices
Ere avalanche or torrent leap beneath
The awakening sunshine; sweet harmonious noises
Haunt the lone forest even when mute the breath
Of summer winds. All *life* in *Sound* rejoices:
There is no silence save with *thee*, O *Death*!

II.

Yes, in thy dreary empire, Death! doth lie
The land of Silence, whence we shall attain
By calm ascension to those heights serene
Where Sound its earthly discord putteth by
And lives for aye in heavenly harmony.
Sweet cadences of Earth, ye strive in vain
For perfect utterance; still the mournful sigh
Of icy winds from that cold, sad domain
Breathes o'er you. Thence forever Death doth press
With sharp invasion on our nether sphere,
And his dark ministers—Disease, Distress,
Decay—mar every tone of music here;
But *there*, where *perfect Life* the soul shall bless,
Shall *pure harmonious Sound* forever glad the ear.

III.

And to the ear o'er which that music flows
Silence shall seem a thought of joy no more.
When from Earth's discords to the wave-washed shore
Or wind-stirred woods we turn us for repose,
While through their melodies with mystic power
Tender and sad the plaint of nature goes,
Full oft the ear would bid their sweetness close
And ask unbroken silence as its dower.
Ah! thus the heart that chants its weary song
Of exile, and that breathes the struggling breath
Of conflict, pleads to die. O heart, be strong!
Look to the world of Life with joyful faith,
For there, oh, nevermore the ear shall long
For Silence,—nevermore the heart shall ask for Death!

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROW- ING.

I.

To thee I turn with reverence ever new,
Thou star of womanhood! The world had long
Watched for thy rising. Genius, with its strong
And dazzling radiance, shining through the dew
Of woman's nature, tender, pure, and true,—
This is thy dower. And, more, to thee belong
The child's heart, singing for the love of song,
The man's brave energy to dare and do,
The poet's ear, that, listening by the shore,
'Mid aislèd woods, beneath the solemn sky,
Hears earth's mysterious unison. Ay, more!
An angel's wing is thine, and far and high
As angels can thy spirit dares to soar,
And on the Heaven of Heavens gaze with uplifted
eye.

II.

Whence had thy gentle nature strength to rise,
To cast the clay off to its pinions clinging.
And, through our azure heavens and o'er them
 winging,

Thus cleave its pathway to the upper skies?
Or was thy heavenly lore learned otherwise?
Was it the holy love in all thy singing
Which won some seraph toward thee, earthward
 bringing

The sights, the sounds, the airs, of Paradise?
Ah! blest the ear which not in vain hath striven
Those high, celestial harmonies to hear;
Blest eye to which the vision pure was given;
Blest voice which speaks with utterance strong and
 clear

Its bright revealings of that unseen Heaven,
Breathing its light and joy o'er our sin-clouded
 sphere.

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI.

I.

OFT when the summer cyclone sweeps the sea
And gathers thence, with fierce, resistless breath,
Unripened harvests for the reaper Death,
I muse on all his spoils; nor least on thee!
Thou leading home thy heart's rich argosy,
Hasting to heal life's pain and fever 'neath
Thy childhood's skies, who foundst the dread decree
Writ on the threshold of thy native shore;
"This land thy weary feet may press no more!"
Hour after hour I hear the billows boom,
See o'er the lessening deck the surges pour,
And wait, with thee, the slow sure-coming doom,
Till the long watch of brave despair is o'er,
And ocean yields thee refuge and a tomb.

II.

High heart,—impetuous, ardent, eager, brave,
Still seeking on the earth a home of rest,—
Couldst thou have slept while cold above thee
 pressed

The valley turf? Ah! sweeter far the grave
That welcomed thee, where heaving billows lave
The brow that throbs not and the tranquil breast:
The tender murmurs of the ocean wave
And its rude thunders chant thy requiem best.
And better thou, methinks, hadst loved, in dying,
Thus cradled on earth's living heart to be,
To its vast pulses thy free form replying
With ceaseless motion. Storms approach not thee
In the clear, tranquil depths where thou art lying,
Pillowed on silver sands, beneath the enshrouding
 sea.

SARA COLERIDGE.

WAS not that woman blest above her peers
Upon whose head Worth, Genius, Beauty, set
Their triple crown? Whose infant glances met
The starlike eyes of poets and of seers?
Whose soul, by Wisdom nursed through ripening
years,
Grew to that high companionship, and yet
Whose cheek with woman's smile was glad, with
tears
Of woman's sacred tenderness was wet;
To whose young spirit, bending by the stream
Fed from the crystal founts of ancient lore,
Love came, to shed the glory of a dream
O'er the clear waters and the solemn shore;
Whose heart, 'neath brows where early laurels gleam,
Enshrined home's holy joys? Could earth give
more?

JEAN INGELow.

A STRONG, sweet voice, a swift, light pinion, rise,
From the low meadow nest 'mid fragrant thyme,
Soaring and singing in the morning prime
Up through the lucid azure of the skies;
Till from the very gate of Paradise
Comes floating back the fresh, clear-ringing chime,
Downward to mist and shade and earthly weather,
Bearing the gladness of that flight sublime.
Thine the lark's song, and thine the lark's free
 pinion,
Springing from daisied grass or hillside heather
And revelling in morning's cloudless ray,
Linking the earth and the high heavens together;
A chant that rings from Faith's serene dominion,
A plume that gleams with light from Duty's change-
 less day.

"HONOR TO WHOM HONOR!"

I.

A FRANK and gracious child, with grave, sweet eyes,
Blue as the violets in English dales;
A brave yet gentle girl, who fronts the gales
On sea-girt downs 'neath weeping English skies
With free, firm step, and soul full early wise;
A maiden, on whose cheek the rose-tint pales
Beneath the sudden splendor of a crown!
Now, from her Eastern realms of old renown,
From oceans whitened with her myriad sails,
From all her fair green hills and valleys wide,
Hark to her people's echoing shout, as down
The aisle by monarchs trod, move side by side
The pair in glorious destiny allied,—
The peerless, princely heart and England's sceptred
Bride!

II.

A matron. Lo! she treads the golden stair
Upward toward shining heights of nobler life.
Queen of herself, the tender, duteous wife
Guides her young sons and guards her daughters
fair;

Lays one soft hand amid her infant's hair,
While firmly one averts impending strife
Among the nations; making peace her care
With her sweet woman's sway. Beside her still
Moves that heroic heart, that saintly soul
Kindred to hers in faith, in aim, in will,
Inspiring, leading toward each glorious goal,
Strengthening her gentle nature to fulfil
Its task, the splendid thralldom of a throne
To bear, till all his steadfast courage is her own.

III.

A mourner. Ah! by love more richly crowned
Than by thine Empire's diadem, to thee
From many an alien land beyond the sea
Are loyal hearts in fervent fealty bound!
Nor less to him, whose radiant brows around
Glow the vast dawn of immortality;
Ye, whose young, wedded footsteps still were found
Seeking great Duty's paths, with service free!
Beloved, faithful Queen! May hastening Time
More gently lead thee o'er his rugged ways,
Onward and upward toward that fairer clime
Where shines thy Morning's Star with undimmed
 rays,
And waft thee thence the clear, celestial chime
Of music sweeter far than e'en thy people's praise.

THE DEPARTING SOUL TO THE BODY.

THE weary child when daylight dies
Looks upward to the Mother's eyes,
And lies in blissful, conscious rest,
Hushed through the twilight, on her breast.
So, at the close of life's long day,
Companion dear, I turn away,
And as the darkness draws more near,
In silent love, in reverent fear,
Would, for a little while apart,
Rest on a more than human Heart.

Peaceful and sweet the dear abode
Reached by one short, sharp, painful road;
No cyclic march of shining spheres,
No tread of swift revolving years,
Nor gauge of Time nor bonds of Space,
Approach that tranquil dwelling-place.

For Earth, her lapsing months shall glide,
Her centuries pour their rushing tide ;
For me the twilight hush most blest
Of timeless and enraptured rest.

Yield thee to deep, serene repose ;
Thy sleep its hour of waking knows,
When thou and I One Voice shall hear
From realms beyond the farthest sphere,—
Melodious, clear, pervading, grand,
A tone of sweet yet dire command,—
A trumpet note that Space shall fill
And through the heart of Being thrill,—
The Archangel's cry that Time is o'er
And Earth's dry dust shall live once more !

Onward that vast, resistless sea,
In solemn tides of harmony,
Shall waft me to the well-known shore
Where thou and I were one of yore.
Mouldered, transformed, or far or near,
Thy severed dust that Voice shall hear,

Shall stir with life, and close above
Behold the comrade of thy love,
In swift embrace around me twine,
And mould its lineaments by mine.

What joy of union shall be ours,
What bliss of new, unfolding powers,
When the dark seed in sorrow sown
Shall wave in light its vernal crown,
Shall rise a denizen of air
With more than angel beauty fair!
Each secret, genial force of earth
Lends vigor to thy second birth,
While I, from joyful, hallowed rest,
Return, thy king, thy guide, thy guest!

Then, free to rest or free to roam
The sinless Universe our home,
Exiled no longer from THAT FACE
Whose light sheds Heaven through farthest space,
Past Eden worlds our flight ascending,
Toward HIM, toward HIM forever tending,

Till rapture pure, intense, complete,
Draws us, adoring, to His feet!
Fear not to die! resign thy breath!
The gate of this new Life is Death.

MISSOLONGHI.

WHAT minstrel wanderer from the mist-clad zone
Turns to the Grecian shore his vessel's prow,—
The "voiceless shore," grief-stricken, silent, lone,
Where e'en "the heroic lay is tuneless now;"
Apollo's self might wear that godlike brow.
Comes he, in pilgrim guise, to break once more
The thrall 'neath which his craven children bow?
To wake the slumberers on that desert shore,
Arts, freedom, glory, fame, to Hellas to restore?

No, not Apollo,—not the clear-eyed youth,
The joyous dweller in the halls of light,
Who breathed the sunlit morning air of Truth,
And trod, serene, the noontide's radiant height;
Not he that slew the Python, by the might
Of a pure will victorious, or whose ruth
Succored the lone Admetus. This is one
Whose life hath been a brief, dark, torrid night,

The fires of heaven its light, the thunder's moan
Its voice, one glorious dream gilding the gloom
alone.

'Tis he, the hapless, wondrous child of song,
Who waked in Northern climes his fitful lyre,
Heard the loud war-cry sweep these plains along,
Felt the high cause his wayward heart inspire,
Hushed his wild harp and pledged his soul of fire
To share the conflict of that struggling band,
To ransom patriot son and Grecian sire,
To wrest their country from the oppressor's hand
Or sleep amid the dust of that heroic land.

Greece heard the vow. O'er ocean's bosom borne,
Hark! the glad shout that greets him from afar
As, gilded with the radiance of the morn,
His canvas gleams like a new-risen star,
And the proud bark, as some triumphal car,
Glides o'er the waters. From the crowded strand
The cannon peals its welcome, soon in war
To speak a sterner thunder. Heart and hand
And voice hail him, the young deliverer of the land.

Thy self-embittered heart, it owns the spell,
While blessings breathe upon thee in that tongue
In other times on conqueror's ears that fell,
Which sages spoke and deathless poets sung!
Alas! deserved reproach its shade hath flung
O'er thy young life! arise and wipe each trace
From thy brief history's page of shame or wrong!
By sacrifice the sullied past efface,
And on Fame's whitest scroll thy purer record trace.

Ah, would that such had been thy nobler fate!
Youth, genius, generous impulse, yet were thine:
Though long profaned, it were not all too late
To kindle in that breast the flame divine
Of high resolve. Yet in the dusky mine
Virtues, like gems, 'mid dross around them cast,
Might gleam, and with emerging lustre shine.
Vain thought! That hour of triumph was thy last,
And all thy story is the dark and erring Past.

The scene is changed: upon that lonely shore
The sun in clouds and tempest has gone down;
The lightnings flash, the deep-voiced thunders roar,
And angry Midnight sheds her darkest frown.

In yon low hut, stretched on no bed of down,
Fevered and dying, Freedom's champion lies:
Is this the end of all his young renown?
Shall death forever seal those eager eyes
Just when his hand was stretched to reach the glorious prize?

Alas! e'en glory's dazzling dream is past,
For the dread slumber on those eyelids falls;
It was the brightest phantom and the last
Of all that lured him. To his fathers' halls
Pale Memory now his parting spirit calls.
There in life's early day he loved to roam:
Once more about him close the ancient walls;
The visioned forms of youth around him come,
The dying wanderer sighs the sacred name of "home."

Of all who gave him love in childhood's years,—
Friend, parent, kindred,—none are near him now
O'er his low couch to pour their kindly tears;
The fond wife banished, scorned the plighted vow:
Though round him manly forms in sorrow bow,

No tender hand of pitying love is there
To wipe the death-dews from the pallid brow,
No reverent voice to breathe the parting prayer
Or whisper words of hope 'mid Nature's last despair.

The mortal pang is o'er: the marble form,
The sculptured features lie, in deep repose;
The impetuous heart, so late that glowed all warm
With passion's fires, ends here its earthly woes:
Thy life's dark hour hath found its mournful close.
Yet one bright sunset-gleam the storm-clouds rent,
And in that land where old Ilyssus flows
Thy name with many a hero's shall be blent,
And living Greece itself shall be thy monument.

Those temples pale no more shall laurels bind,
Nor myrtles wreathe them freshly as of yore,
The warrior's chaplet ne'er for thee be twined,
Pleasure nor song nor fame delight thee more:
For thee the impassioned dream of life is o'er.
But awe-struck hearts afar thy fate shall mourn,
Thy broken sword, thy unstrung lyre deplore,
And e'en thy native land forgive, and learn
To shed her generous tears upon thy funeral urn.

SAD, SWEET REMEMBRANCE.

DIM the bright Bouvardia's flame,
Pale the purple violet's glow,
Sad the sound of every name
Whence my gladness used to flow;
To the grief-o'ershadowed heart
Nature speaks no more, nor Art.

Faintly gleams that fairest star
'Mid the twilight's rosy deep,
Cold, from lonely heights afar,
Now its distant watch doth keep
O'er the summits dark and steep
Where, in silent, mournful trance,
Thou dost bid me walk and weep,
O sad Remembrance!

Only in the House of Prayer
Leaps anew Life's golden tide;

Sorrow seems GOD's angel, care,
Trial, pain, are glorified.
Earth and Heaven, in that blest place,
Yield me back each dear-loved face.

O'er me, there, the fadeless Spring
Dawns, through wintry tempests wrought,
Faith uplifts her soaring wing
Past the drear domain of thought,
High o'er mists of Time and Sense
Sees a splendor, pure, intense,—
Morning with its glow and bloom
Flooding all the twilight gloom.

'Tis the Day-Spring from on High
Brightening Earth's storm-laden sky.
Ere that radiant morning breaks
All the breathing air awakes
Chanting in prophetic strain,—
Whispering Love can never die,
Death is but a semblance vain,
Life is life eternally.

Walk no more in mournful trance!
Watch, the blinding tears restrain!
Wait the wondrous dawn, for then
Pulseless hearts shall throb again,
Hands shall clasp, nor thrill with pain
Of loss or severance!

ONE who bore the mournful weight
Of His sin-sick world's distress,
WHO beside its graves did weep,
Trode its pathways desolate,
Comes to renovate and bless,
Wakes it from its fevered sleep.

Then the day, with swift advance,
Day of bloom, fulfilment, birth,
Stealing o'er the waiting Earth,
Shall transfigure in its glance
Each gray peak, each cloud-wrapped height,
Of thy mountain barrier dread
Where our wounded feet did tread,
Till all thy summits gleam with light,
O sweet Remembrance!

THE DYING MEXICAN INDIAN.

A STATUE BY CRAWFORD.

SHE was the fairest of the Indian maids,
Than hers no lighter footstep brushed the dew
At morning from the silent forest glades,
None swifter o'er the green savannahs flew,
And, her young form in sculptured beauty lying,
But for the piercing shaft who could have guessed
That were the grace and loveliness of dying
Which seemed so fair an attitude of rest.

Those rounded limbs repose as on a bed
Of summer flowers or fresh and dewy grass,
Gently around the feather-cinctured head
I seem to hear the winds of evening pass;
And in the fulness of that lifted eye,
And the soft lips that gradually part,
There is no sign of mortal agony,
Though the keen arrow feeds upon her heart.

Is it the stoicism of her race

That, even in simple girlhood, thus hath power
The deadly pang and terror to efface,

And shed such calmness o'er this awful hour?
Doth she forget how sweet it was to dwell

By silver streams, beneath the greenwood's shade,
Forget how hard it is to bid farewell

To those whose love her life all gladness made?

No, she forgot not; for a moment rushed

The tide of anguish, almost of despair;
It passed, and through her bosom's channel gushed
The holy hopes that now have triumphed there;

For she had heard from Christian lips the tale

Of Love Divine that stooped to human death,
And felt her dim and erring worship fail

Beneath this higher, purer, holier faith.

And tenderly within her dying grasp

Is pressed the sacred symbol of her creed,
As if the memory to her soul to clasp

Of the pure Victim doomed on Cross to bleed;

And she, herself a victim, lifts to Heaven

The appealing thought that ne'er is raised in vain,
And to her untaught spirit straight are given
Visions of bliss in place of mortal pain.

Earth fades before her, and she sees no more

Her father's tent the summer boughs among,
For Paradise hath opened wide its door,

She sees its bowers, she listens to its song;
No mother's eye, no sister's voice, is near,

But full of love the white-winged angels stand
Above her lowly death-bed, soothe and cheer
And waft her soul to their own spirit-land.

“A M E R I C A.”

THE STATUE DESIGNED BY CRAWFORD FOR THE
EASTERN FRONT OF THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

FAIR daughter of the nations! Is it thou,
With mingled air of softness and command,
Who crown'st with stars a broad and queenly brow,
And hold'st an empire's guerdons in thy hand?

Grand is thy presence, glorious with the grace
And vigorous freshness of thy morning prime,
Youth's tender memories lingering on thy face
'Mid prophet dreams of power that dawn sublime.

Serene and clear thy vision-lighted eye
Fronts the blue heaven that guards thy subject
land,
'Neath whose wide dome thy trackless forests lie,
In whose pure air thy fortress mountains stand.

Thou hear'st far off the voice of either sea
Call to thine eastern and thy western shores,
And on thine ear the murmur vast and free
Of winds that sweep thy wide savannahs pours,—

A regal virgin, strong of heart and will,
Whose lofty faith subdues her maiden fears,
Who bids the impetuous soul of youth be still,
And looks undaunted through the coming years;—

Who with calm pulse surveys her vast dominion,
Trusts to herself and Heaven in danger's hour,
And bids her eagle with half-folded pinion
Lay at her feet the tokens of her power.

Rise, fair, prophetic marble! Lift thy head
O'er the broad realm whose type thou yet shalt
be,
When, with auroral grace around her shed,
She stands majestic, strong, serene, like thee,—

When, empress of herself, she holds in sway
The exulting vigor of her fervid youth,
And lifts her pure young forehead to the day
Crowned with the stars of Honor, Faith, and
Truth;

When deeds of living light her form enshrine
Like star-gemmed robes, and when her steadfast
eye
Forever seeks the eternal heavens like thine,
While idle at her feet her symbol arrows lie.

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

WHEN the rhythmic cadence sweet
Of departing Angels' feet
Chimed above the Eden land,
And their glittering pinions furled
Faded from the earlier world,
One bright, lingering star did stand
Glorious on its azure height,
Pouring splendor o'er the night,
Sign on Earth's untroubled sky
Of most Sacred Presence nigh.
Prophet Star: whose steadfast rays
Paled and dimmed, as mist and haze
Shrouding that sweet morning air
Hid and quenched its radiance fair,
Until its sphere through distant orbits drawn,
Became for other worlds the Star of Dawn.

Still, where'er its glories fell
Earth confessed its potent spell.
In the lands o'er which it streamed
Sparkles from its splendor gleamed.
On the soil and in the sky
Where its shafts of light did lie,
Ineffaceably there shine
Traces of that ray divine,
Witnessing Earth's deepening night,
Lacking strength to lend her light,
Tokens, still, that once from far
Beamed on her that wondrous Star.
Eastern lands its glance had known
While its earlier lustre shone;
Gazing heavenward, Plato's eyes
Saw its waning splendor rise,
From Earth's skies receding, yet,
Ere o'er Western shores it set,
The wild red man's soul, untaught,
Half its fading glory caught;
Then no more it shone on men
Till, its course fulfilled, again

In the East it rose, and shed
Radiance round an infant's head,
And on the adoring hearts and forms of them
Who watched their flocks by night at Bethlehem.

To the red man's soul its light
Said, "There is a Lord of Might:
The Great Spirit's voice obey!"
But its ever-lessening ray
Scarce sufficed to point the way.
To the Athenian Sage its gleam
Quivered through a mystic dream
Of some fairer, loftier life
As the goal of earthly strife:
Hovered round a half-seen form,—
Conqueror 'mid the earthly storm,
By the untold Might that lies
In supreme self-sacrifice.
But in Orient lands, where fell
First the Star's undying spell,
One heroic, saintly youth,
Traced the way and gauged the truth:

Him its scarce-diminished ray
Taught his princely state to lay
Low, in service to his kind,
And a deep delight to find
In the love of living things,—
Subjects of the King of Kings.
Noble heart, in faith and deed,
Founder of a gentle creed,
Victor over sense and sin,
Thou the diadem didst win
That no monarch's son has worn,
Of an earthly father born,
For thy mortal footsteps trod
Pathways of the unknown GOD!
Prophets, priests, and kings afar
Watched, with thee, that fading star,
Through the slowly waning night
Waited for the coming light,
Few, save thee, had tracked the way
Upward towards the dawning day.
Yet the joy that hidden lies
In the depths of sacrifice,
In the sight of HIM, Who gave
Heaven His wandering ones to save,

In the hope of that full bliss
Of God's saints, thy heart did miss.
Reverent pacing holy ground,
Thou the truth, the way, hadst found,
But the ray that o'er thee shone
Lighted this, thy world, alone,
And thy young soul, spent with victorious strife
Asked for *Nirvana's* rest; not Heaven's full, joyous
Life.

Yea! and *rest* indeed shall be
Guerdon of the spirit free:
Earth is sorrow, toil, and care
To the hearts that bravely share
Earthly burdens; then with rest
Weary heart and hand are blest;
Busy daylight finds its close;
Sweet the hush, the deep repose,
Sorrow, care, and labor cease,—
Soul and body full of peace!
But more radiant hopes invest
That bright hour, when from its rest

All earth's ransomed host awakes
And the unending Morning breaks!
Not Nirvana's deathless calm
Is the immortal spirit's balm,
Living souls demand the strife
Of noble action,—this is Life!
Not to hold within their view
All things lovely, pure, and true,
But in deeds that shall endure
To enshrine the true and pure;
All things great and worthy to achieve,
This the Life that noble souls would live!

Over Bethlehem's midnight skies
See the herald Star arise!
Pointing where, in mortal clay,
HE, the Life, the Truth, the Way,
Lord of Angels, girt with power,
Winged with love, accepts the dower
Of earth's sorrows, deigns to come,
An infant, to Earth's lowliest home;
Fathoms all the woes that lie
Clothed in our humanity;

Life of toil and death of shame,
Makes His own. Then, as a flame,
To His native heights upborne,
Cries, "Come hither, ye who mourn,
Ye who toil, and ye who die;
Fear not, loved ones: IT IS I!"
Gathering still His chosen few,
Every stainless soul He knew,
From the hour when Abel's clay
Cold beside His altar lay,
Downward through the darkening years
Of martyrs' blood and mourners' tears,—
Sweetening all that deadly rain,
Blessing still the path of pain.
Thee, Siddartha!* thee HE saw,
Who unto thyself wast law,
Thou shalt know, thou glorious youth,
HIM Who *spake* and *was* The Truth,
Thou shalt see His perfect day
WHO *proclaimed* and *was* The Way,

* The name given to Prince Gautama, the Buddh, in Mr. Arnold's beautiful poem "The Light of Asia."

When The Life HE *was* and *gave*,
Lifts thee on its shining wave,
And HIS Hands thy head shall crown
Who for thee HIS life laid down!
Thou, of men misunderstood,
Of thy race misnamed the Buddh,
Who the flag of love unfurled
Over half the heathen world!—
Souls like thine, from East and West,
Weary, dying, found a rest
Sweeter than Nirvana! trod
The fair Paradise of GOD!
When HE bids HIS Morning break,
They, like thee, renewed shall wake,
With all HIS blessed saints to whom are given
The glorious activities of Heaven,
While through that golden dawn again shall rise
The Star of Eden's morn and Bethlehem's midnight
skies.

THE END.





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